

REMARKS

The Office Action of August 30, 2006 has been received, and the allowance of claims 5 and 7-10 has been noted with satisfaction. The present Amendment corrects an informality in claim 5.

The Office Action rejects claims 4, 6, 11, and 12 for obviousness in view of JP 63-143332 in view of a French patent to Froumajou. The present Amendment cancels claims 4, 11, and 12, thus making the rejection moot with respect to these claims. For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by claim 6 is patentable over JP '332 and Froumajou.

Claim 6 concludes with the “wherein” clause which recited that “each piston (3) has a skirt portion toward the outside of the engine that is longer than a skirt portion thereof toward the center of the engine.” It is respectfully submitted that this is neither disclosed nor suggested by JP '332 (which is the reference that the Office Action relies on for this feature).

As is known in the art, the term “piston skirt” refers to part of the sidewall of a piston, measured downward from the piston pin. Reduced-side versions of Figure 2 of the present application (left) and Figure 1 of JP '332 (right) are reproduced on the following page.

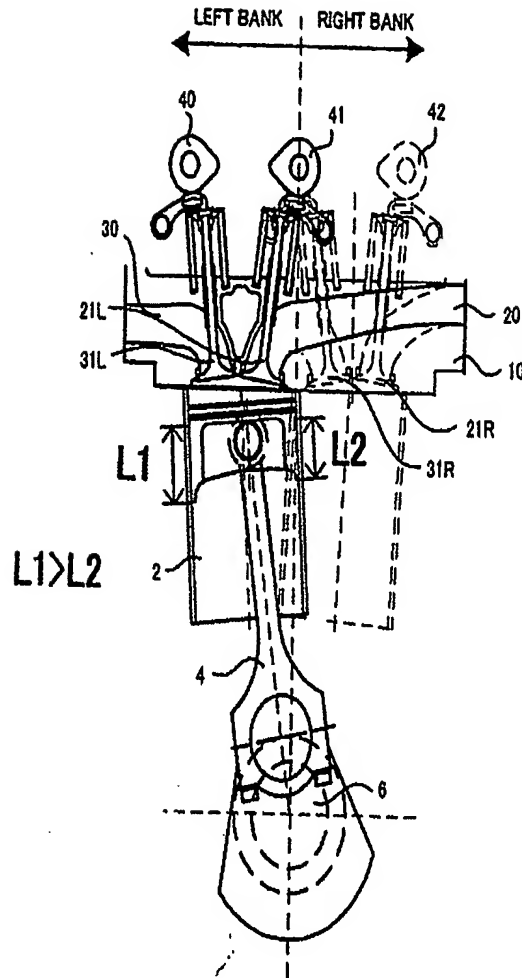
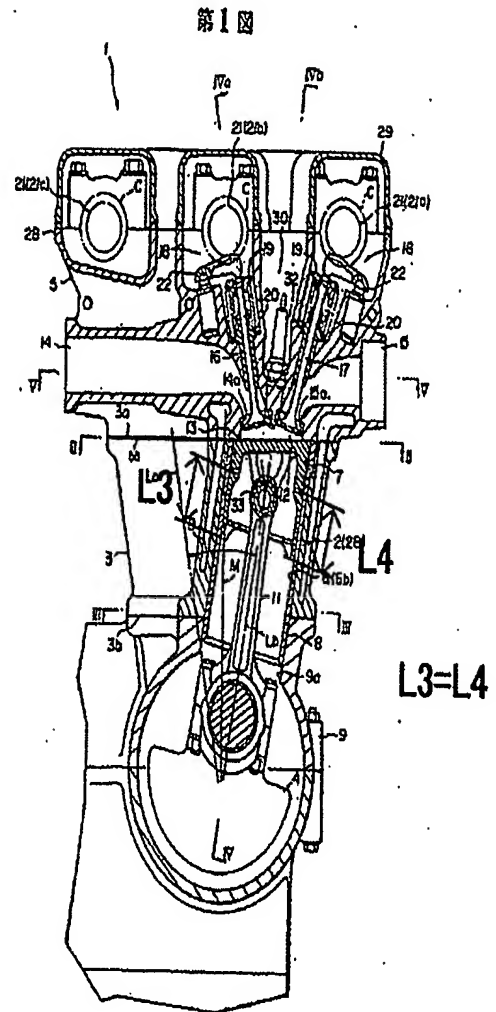


FIG. 2

CLAIM 6



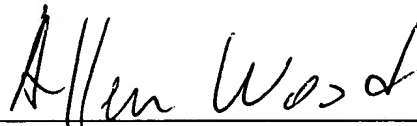
JP63-143332A

It will be apparent that the skirt length L1 toward the outside of the engine disclosed in the present application is longer than the skirt length L2 toward the center of the engine. This leads to the advantages that are described in the paragraph at page 5 of the application, lines 15-24. In contrast to what is recited in claim 6, the skirt length L4 toward the outside of the engine in JP '332 is equal to the skirt length L3 toward the center of the engine.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the engine disclosed in JP '332 is different from the engine recited in claim 6. Moreover, nothing in the Froumajou reference would have led an ordinarily skilled person to modify JP '332 so as to achieve the engine defined by claim 6.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 6 should be allowed, along with the claims that have been previously been allowed. Reconsideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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